

HOUSE of SPINN



ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2022

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To Those Being
Inside The
House Of Spinn

For celebration this Summer, we are proud to have supported, and delighted to share a new creation by Ben Swithen.

With their game 'Buy Hyacinths', we are invited to explore a dreamworld with energised calm, and to embrace interactions which are surprising and full of linguistic, aural and visual colour. We hope you enjoy this experience very much!

Ben was one of the first people that I met when moving into my flat on the hillsides by Bretton Hall Campus, 19 years ago. They were to be my neighbour as decided by the University administrative process, and I am eternally grateful for that accident, and to have shared a deep friendship with them since.

I remember Ben drawing my attention to the poem (which you can read on pg. 6) on the outer wall of the library building at the Bretton Hall Campus several times. Like a seed beneath the concrete aspirations of town planners, this poem has remained a personal gift in thought, in feelings, testing the surface between itself and the light. Though but a small part of the story, Ben has now created a world in this game where the long-carried puzzle of John Greenleaf Whittier's words can enjoy light, alongside yourself (as Sheepy) in this new experience.

I would like this edition of House Of Spinn to be dedicated to the people who played and were playful in various ways in the mansion and surrounding environment of Bretton Hall, between 2003-2006. The beauty of your beings has been with me ever since, whether you are near or far.

All love,
Jan The Rabbit

For more information about House Of Spinn, please be in touch:
houseofspinn@gmail.com



Acceptable in  my
Sight



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Photographs of Bretton Hall by chelsea hare, 2018



House Of Spinn Manifesto

V. 1.0

We aim to **support artistic expression**, dancing with the following ideas.

We believe in **laughing in the face of Death**, as regularly as possible.

We are a creature with **infinite views in infinite time**. We know how much we don't know as we add something real or unreal to the jigsaw.

We believe in **respect and equality** for all people inside the building, and outside of it.

We spot absurdity and delight in it! We puckishly feather the feet of the sanctimonious.

At the *House Of Spinn* we encourage happenings in all environments, near and far.

We aim to invent boldly, in the way we communicate, in the way our art is made, in the way our art is delivered or experienced, in the way we let it go.

Residents and guests are not confined to identify as a performer or as an audience member, but are fluid transformers, respecting and responding organically to the situation as it is to them.

We seek to overstand. We kick up.

We encourage active participation from, and love for, all people, animals and living organisms. We invite participation from and celebrate ghosts from before and after too.

At the *House Of Spinn* we believe in the profound wisdom of youth, and uplift the new. We are not precious about that which no longer serves the health and liberation of those now present. We rip it up and start again! We embrace continuous change.

IF THOU OF FORTUNE
BE BEREFT
AND OF THINE EARTHLY
STORE HAVE LEFT
TWO LOAVES, SELL ONE,
AND WITH THE DOLE
BUY HYACINTHS
TO FEED THE SOUL

I lived with my worst friend.

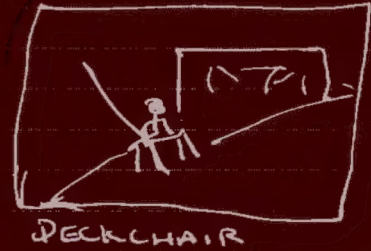
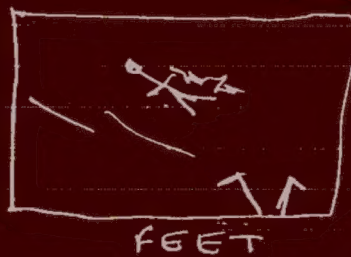
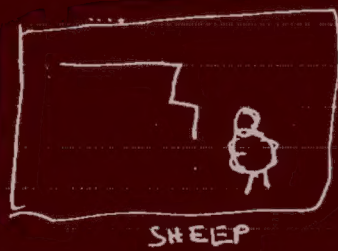
He loves this poem.

In preference to paying bills,
he would buy himself something nice
to smoke, and, shaking the baggie,
exclaim, 'hyacinths!'

SOME SPINN FOR YOUR SOUP



Reconstruct Your Dimensions, Remove
The You, Reconstruct Dimensions,
Remove The Dimensions, Reconstruct,
Remove The Reconstruction, Construct,
Remove The Construct, Remove The
Remove, Move





Ben Swithen

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Follow Ben on Twitter
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QUIT HAVING BREAD, BOZO.

I have a persistent dream of returning to my university accommodation. It varies, from week to week, whether I've gone to study, or just to live. It's glorious.

It wasn't nice accommodation. My parents said it was like a prison. I liked it.

In reality, the block has been laid waste. It was torn down not long after I left. Total destruction! It was rubble, and now it's less than rubble. Good riddance! All beautiful things must be destroyed. But I still go there by night.

I don't really like to look back. That's how you get old and give up. On graduation day we went out to a bar. I was excited for some kind of new life - it never really blossomed, but never mind - and I was irked that everyone wanted to talk about the past. Anecdotes. Familiar. No story was new to anybody. I left when no-one was looking.

In May, I was in enjoying a particularly bright run of these dreams. I dreamed the place had been rebuilt from golden wood. The feeling of re-entering my room was spiritual joy! Waking up was disillusioning, but it's good to be disillusioned. That's when I was approached to make something for House of Spinn. I wanted to build the idea from the dreams: going back to a lost place. Glory that ends in destruction. The bright past with half a handful or retrospect. Mourning the dead and living in their sheepy shoes.

I enjoy games! I find it hard to find ones that set my heart on fire, but Buy Hyacinths is one I wish I hadn't made, so I could play it and be surprised. It's like a puppet show. You inhabit Sheepy and go where you will. The story is laid out before you, but you choose who and what, and mainly when. Like the other dream, you're the actor on stage with no rehearsal, but the script comes to you as you need it. Like life.

As I say to guests who depart my house: have fun, and good luck, and beware! Be cognisant of your own mortality. Own it! Enjoy it! Put on your sheep and dance. Don't stand still. Lollop! Nuzzle! Be of good cheer! Your circumstances are going to change and your life is going to change. Deny it at your peril! Things will definitely get worse. Look out the window! They're already plummeting! But some things will get better. Like in the poem, go buy a hyacinth.

I don't even like hyacinths.

Download
'Buy Hyacinths'

by
Ben Swithen

<https://cow-children.itch.io/buy-hyacinths>





THE TRUE HISTORY OF SHEEPY

I made Sheepy for a troubled production of Tamburlaine in 2007. This Sheepy was a prop - though that feels an unkind word for an animal friend. Not a puppet and not a toy. When I unveiled the soft Sheepy I had made, my co-author Tom asked 'where's its head?'. I protested that sheep don't have heads. They're like clouds with eyes on the sides, and that was what I had replicated in fabric.

I was mistaken. Go to any sheep field. They have heads.

Sheepy enjoyed a small cameo at the end of Tamburlaine, in a final twist, a joyous reunion with the tragic hero. (I love a tragedy with a happy ending). Since then, the ovine orb has lived on my shelf, occasionally emerging to greet visitors and be shown off.

'Buy Hyacinths' was not intended to be a game about a sheep. I hadn't yet started a design on Person Sandchester (The human lead character I had in mind, a louche non-binary of great enthusiasm), when I decided to add Sheepy to the game as a non-speaking background character, walking furniture. A prop again. But when I saw how Sheepy lolloped, how they bounded through the fields, I realised I had found my star. At last, a spotlight for Sheepy.

I've tried redesigning other animals from my heart's memory, but they did not set the world on fire. I animated a lumpen horse, and drew an inscrutable cat, but as deliberate works they smacked on insincerity. Only Sheepy comes from pure folly.





LINKS

for more information
email: houseofspinn@gmail.com

YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBOmORQuZ8pwMEjSGMQemQA>

houseofspinn.bandcamp.com

[instagram.com/houseofspinn](https://www.instagram.com/houseofspinn)

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